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## **Sen. Bishop's ID theft, foster-care bills signed into law**

**LANSING** – Bills that protect Michigan residents from identity theft and improve the foster-care review process were signed into law today by the governor. Sen. Mike Bishop, R-Rochester, sponsored both pieces of legislation.

Public Act 452 is the main part of legislation that gives Michigan residents one of the strongest protections against identity theft in the nation.

“My legislation is about providing consumers with a peace of mind and strengthening the hand of law enforcement,” Bishop said. “Thanks to Michigan’s model legislation, citizens of our state now have remedies to restore their credit and good name should they fall victim to identity thieves.

“Also included in these consumer friendly bills are provisions which will allow police and prosecutors the tools they need to pursue and punish those who would steal and fraudulently use another person’s identity.”

The ID-theft package is a broad effort to stop the explosion of identity theft in Michigan and help victims get their good credit back. The legislation provides a comprehensive overhaul of Michigan’s ID theft laws and aids law enforcement officers in tracking down and punishing identity thieves. It also helps victims restore their credit histories. Bishop initiated the effort to crack down on identity theft in Michigan.

The governor also signed Public Act 477, which improves how the status of foster children is reviewed and shortens the time the review process takes. It also makes Michigan law consistent with federal law so no aid dollars are jeopardized. Officials from the Michigan Supreme Court testified that the state could have faced a \$37.5 million penalty because status hearings could have taken up to 189 days instead of 182 as required by federal law.

The legislation Bishop’s bill is a part of requires a permanency planning hearing within 12 months after a child was removed from the home and within 12 months after the preceding hearing. Additionally, it prohibits the cancellation or delay of a foster care review hearing or permanency planning hearing, regardless of whether a petition to terminate parental rights or another matter was pending.

(More)

“Given the ill-health of Michigan’s economy, sound public policy is that which ensures that Michigan receives all of the federal aid dollars it deserves,” Bishop said. “It’s encouraging to see this bill become law, especially when it helps protect one of our state’s most vulnerable groups,” Bishop said.

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